

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 01616 01 OF 02 301518Z

45

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 OMB-01 NIC-01 /074 W

----- 095910

R 301502Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7594

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION USBERLIN

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 01616 01 OF 02 301518Z

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 01616

GENEVA FOR CSCE DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: GENSCHER IN THE TOILS

REF: BONN 15861, OCTOBER 8, 1974

SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER CONTINUES TO FACE A SITUATION WHERE CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT DOMINATES THE NATIONAL SCENE AND EXERCISES TIGHT CONTROL OVER THE MAIN FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. GENSCHER AT THE SAME TIME IS GOING THROUGH A DIFFICULT TIME AS LEADER OF THE FDP. WITH SIX LAND ELECTIONS DUE THIS YEAR AND THE FDP CONFRONTED WITH A STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE, HE WILL BE INCREASINGLY PREOCCUPIED WITH PARTY PROBLEMS, AND WILL TEND TO SEE FOREIGN POLICY THROUGH THE DOMESTIC POLICY PRISM. HE WILL PROBABLY FEEL HE HAS LITTLE ROOM FOR MANEUVER, AND HE WILL BE FAIRLY INFLEXIBLE AND NARROW IN HIS POLICY APPROACHES. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE OUR LAST ASSESSMENT OF HIM (REFTEL), GENSCHER'S POSITION HAS BECOME EVEN MORE DIFFICULT. CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT DOMINATES THE NATIONAL SCENE EVEN MORE CLEARLY THAN BEFORE AND HOLDS THE MAIN FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES TIGHTLY IN HIS OWN HAND. GENSCHER IS, AS IT WERE, OPERATING AT A SECOND LEVEL. THERE IS NOTHING RADICALLY NEW IN THIS. UNDER BRANDT, IN THE HEYDAY OF OSTPOLITIK, THE CHANCELLERY ALSO KEPT THE MAIN THREADS IN ITS OWN HANDS, WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY UNDER SCHEEL PLAYING A SECONDARY, SUPPORTING ROLE TO THE CHANCELLERY TEAM UNDER BRANDT AND BAHR. BUT THE PERSONALITY DIFFERENCES ACCENTUATE THE DOMINANCE OF THE CHANCELLERY. SCHMIDT OUTSHINES GENSCHER MUCH MORE COMPLETELY THAN BRANDT DID SCHEEL. BRANDT'S RELATIONS WITH SCHEEL WERE GOOD. THE SCHMIDT-GENSCHER RELATIONSHIP IS AT BEST UNEASY.

2. GENSCHER'S TROUBLES AS LEADER OF THE FDP HAVE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 01616 01 OF 02 301518Z

BECOME AN INCREASING BURDEN. THE FDP'S POOR SHOWING IN THE BAVARIA AND HESSE ELECTIONS HAVE RAISED DOUBTS ABOUT THE PARTY'S CONTINUING VIABILITY. THE SIX LAND ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR THIS YEAR WILL SUBJECT THE FDP, AND GENSCHER, TO A DIFFICULT TEST IN THE TIME AHEAD. GENSCHER'S PERSONAL POSITION IN THE PARTY IS NOT NEARLY AS SECURE AS WAS SCHEEL'S. HE WAS CONFIRMED AS CHAIRMAN AT THE PARTY CONVENTION LAST FALL BUT NOT

WITHOUT EVIDENCE OF CHALLENGE WHICH COULD BECOME MORE PRESSING IF IT WAS CLEAR THAT HIS HOLD WAS SLIPPING. THE FDP LEADERSHIP AND THE PARTY AS A WHOLE SHOW LACK OF COHESION, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY IS BEING LAID AT GENSCHER'S DOOR AT LEAST IN PART. IT IS NOT AN EX-AGGERATION TO SAY THAT THE FDP IS FIGHTING FOR ITS POLITICAL EXISTENCE. THERE IS DOUBT AS TO WHETHER IT CAN, FOR EXAMPLE, SURMOUNT THE FIVE PERCENT OBSTACLE IN THE KEY LAND ELECTION IN NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIA IN MAY. AS PARTY LEADER, GENSCHER IS ALSO FIGHTING FOR HIS OWN SURVIVAL AS A MAJOR POLITICAL FIGURE.

3. THE BEARING OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS THAT, WITH PARTY POLITICAL PRESSURES WEIGHING SO HEAVILY ON HIM, GENSCHER IS INCREASINGLY APT TO SEE FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES THROUGH THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRISM. ADMITTEDLY, THIS PHENOMENON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BONN 01616 02 OF 02 301519Z

45
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 OMB-01 NIC-01 /074 W

----- 095926

R 301502Z JAN 75
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7595
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION OECD PARIS
USMISSION USBERLIN
USDEL MBFR VIENNA
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY BERN
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY VIENNA

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BONN 01616 02 OF 02 301519Z

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 01616

IS NOT CONFINED TO GENSCHER, BUT FOR THE REASONS STATED, IT APPLIES PARTICULARLY TO HIM. THE EFFECT HAS BEEN APPARENT IN RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. GENSCHER MADE A HEAVY INVESTMENT IN GETTING EC APPROVAL FOR LOCATION OF THE EC VOCATIONAL CENTER IN BERLIN. THIS RELATIVELY MINOR MATTER WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO HIM -- MOST OBSERVERS WOULD SAY IT WAS OF DISPROPORTIONATE IMPORTANCE. HE SAW IN IT PRESUMABLY AN OPPORTUNITY TO FIGURE AS A CHAMPION OF BERLIN AND IMPROVE HIS PARTY'S CHANCES IN THE UPCOMING BERLIN ELECTION AND HIS OWN NATIONAL STANDING. IN THE MATTER OF THE CONCLUSION OF A CONSULAR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GDR AND AUSTRIA, GENSCHER HAS TAKEN AN EXTREMELY HARD PUBLIC LINE. HIS PURPOSE WAS TO BE SEEN AS A FIRM DEFENDER OF GERMAN INTERESTS ON A SENSITIVE "NATIONAL" ISSUE. HOWEVER, THE REACTION HAS BEEN GENERALLY UNFAVORABLE. APART FROM AUSTRIAN INDIGNATION, THERE IS A WIDE-SPREAD FEELING IN BONN THAT GENSCHER OVERPLAYED HIS HAND. HE HAS SEEMED TO BE HEAVY-HANDED, CLUMSY, OVERCOMMITTED, NOT VERY SMART. THIS VIEW IS TO BE FOUND NOT ONLY IN THE MEDIA BUT IN A FAIRLY BROAD RANGE OF POLITICAL OPINION, AND IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE ITSELF.

4. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE CURRENT PATTERN IS LIKELY TO CHANGE APPRECIABLY IN THE MONTHS AHEAD. SCHMIDT WILL

CONTINUE TO DOMINATE THE SCENE, AND GENSCHER WILL BE LEFT WITH ISSUES NOT CONSIDERED TO BE OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE BY THE CHANCELLERY. HE WILL FEEL INCREASINGLY INHIBITED BY THE FDP'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONCERNs AND HIS OWN FUTURE AS PARTY LEADER. THIS SITUATION WILL PROBABLY NOT IMPACT ON ISSUES OF MAJOR INTEREST TO THE US, BUT WE WILL SEE A CERTAIN INFLEXIBILITY AND NERVOUSNESS ON GENSCHER'S PART, A TENDENCY TO KNEE-JERK REACTIONS INSTEAD OF WELL THOUGHT OUT APPROACHES TO LONGER TERM FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. IN SHORT, GENSCHER'S FRAME OF REFERENCE WILL PROBABLY BE NARROW AND TACTICAL. IN PRACTICAL TERMS, BERLIN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BONN 01616 02 OF 02 301519Z

ISSUES WILL CONTINUE TO ATTRACT GENSCHER'S ATTENTION MORE THAN WE MIGHT WISH. HE WILL BE CONCERNED TO DEFLECT ANY OPPOSITION CRITICISM THAT HE IS FAILING TO STAND UP FOR BERLIN. HE WILL BE SENSITIVE, AND HE WILL FEEL THAT HIS FREEDOM OF ACTION IS CIRCUMSCRIBED. ALL IN ALL, A DIFFICULT TIME AHEAD FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTER. THE NEED TO HANDLE HIM CAREFULLY IS CLEAR, FOR HE IS A TOUGH AND STUBBORN POLITICAL IN-FIGHTER WHO WILL NOT GIVE IN EASILY.

HILLENBRAND

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BONN01616
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750034-0693
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975018/aaaaagng.tel
Line Count: 251
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BONN 15861, 75 OCTOBER 8, 75 1974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GENSCHER IN THE TOILS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GE, FDP, (GENSCHER, HANS-DIETRICH), (SCHMIDT, HELMUT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006